REMARKS

The Office Action mailed February 12, 2004 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-55 were pending in the application with claims 9-55 being withdrawn. Claim 1 has been amended, withdrawn claims 9-55 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 56-58 have been added. Therefore, claims 1-8 and 56-58 are pending in the application and are submitted for reconsideration.

This Amendment changes, adds, and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, are presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claim 6 is objected to because of a minor informality. In reply, claim 6 has been amended to address the informality.

In the Office Action, claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 6,370,513 to Kolawa et al. (hereafter "Kolawa"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Each of the independent claims 1, 57, and 58 recite a recommending system (or method/software) that, *inter alia*, receives descriptor input regarding the plurality of descriptors of at least a consumer product from at least two independent nodes on the network. For example, as shown in Fig. 5, a manufacturers site (520, 522) may provide physical descriptors or characteristics of a product directly over a network (for example, the shown Internet). Alternatively, input regarding descriptors may be received from any of the other independent nodes 508, 512, and 514 that are also connected over the network to a recommendation engine at the computer system at node 504.

Therefore, each of the independent claims recite (1) receiving input regarding at least some of the descriptors for some of the consumer products from independent nodes on a network; (2) determining a difference between the plurality of consumer products by differentiating at least one descriptor of each of the plurality of consumer products; (3) classifying the plurality of consumer products into at least two classes; (4) assigning a weighting term for each of the plurality of descriptors based on the descriptors ability to sort

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between the at least two classes; and (5) using the weighting term in order to make the recommendation.

At least the features 1, 2, and 5 listed above and their combination with the claimed invention is not disclosed or suggested by Kolawa. Specifically, Kolawa relates to matching a user preference vector to a product vector to determine whether a product is suitable for recommendation. Nowhere does Kolawa teach of suggest the features listed above nor their combination in the claimed invention.

Specifically, Kolawa teaches away from the receiving input regarding descriptors for a product from a plurality of independent nodes since it teaches that creation of the product vectors (for example, for recommending dishes) includes parsing an original recipe for its ingredients and then mapping the ingredients to the chemical components that make up the ingredients. See, for example, col. 3, lines 26-32 of Kolawa. That is, there is no teaching of the independently receiving the descriptors for a product from a plurality of independent nodes since the disclosed process in Kolawa is clearly designed to be executed by (or at) the recommendation engine. Furthermore, Kolawa actually teaches away from this claimed feature because it teaches a automatic recommendation system that recommends items based solely on that user's preferences. See col. 2, lines 47-50 of Kolawa. This teaches away from the receiving product descriptors from other independent nodes that may also include other consumers or parties involved in specifying information related to providing descriptors for consumer products.

Neither does Kolawa teach or suggest using a weighting term for descriptors that is determined based on its ability to sort between the classes into which the consumer products are classified. Kolawa broadly discloses the use of scaling coefficients for use with the user preference vector and/or the product preference vector based on its impact on a user's taste and/or a product characteristic. See col. 10, lines 24-29 of Kolawa. However, nowhere does Kolawa teach that the weighting term for a descriptor is determined based on the ability of the descriptor to sort between the specified classes into which the plurality of consumer products are classified. Therefore, the scaling coefficients of Kolawa are not derived using the claimed process for determining the claimed weighting terms.

Therefore, these recited features in the independent claims are believed to be patentable over the applied prior art.

The dependent claims are also patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims on which they ultimately depend. In addition, they recite additional patentable features when considered as a whole.

For example, new claim 56 recites the intrinsic descriptors include descriptors from a electronic nose signature which refers to an electronic nose olfactory print for a consumer product. See page 7, lines 16-31 of the specification. Such a combination of an electronic nose signature with a recommendation engine is also not taught or suggested by the prior art and provides an additional reason for the patentability of claim 56.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding the application, or if an examiner's amendment would facilitate the allowance of one or more of the claims, the examiner is courteously invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicants hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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